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gallery. Here, too, are other Asia Minor rugs from Ladik and Bergamo. Two striking pieces on this wall are so-called "dragon carpets" with bold patterns of archaic character. Hanging on the opposite wall with the Persian rugs, or displayed on the floor of the exhibition gallery, are seven beautiful examples of the so-called "Damascus rugs"; these rare carpets, distinguished by their unusual color scheme, date from the sixteenth century and were probably woven in northwestern Asia Minor.

It may be of interest to quote the following extract from the introduction to the catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Early Oriental Carpets, which the Museum held in 1910-11: "Although a beginning has been made in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, no institution of fine arts in this country has as yet a collection of old rugs in any way equal to the collections in nearly every large European museum, especially in those of London, Paris, Berlin and Lyons."

Since 1910, the Museum's own collection of oriental rugs has been greatly increased through the Altman and the Fletcher Bequests and the gift of the J. Pierpont Morgan Collection. Furthermore, the Museum has been privileged, since 1910-11, to exhibit as an indefinite loan from C. F. Williams the treasures of the Joseph Lees Williams Memorial Collection of Oriental Rugs. With these collections supplemented by the present remarkable Loan Exhibition, it may be stated with confidence that the Museum offers today an unsurpassed opportunity for the study and enjoyment of oriental rugs. J. B.

### ART AND A NEW AGE

THIS letter, written by Sir Martin Conway, was published in the London Times of September 13. It was inspired by the controversy over the Museum Loan Exhibition of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings, and will be of interest to readers of the BULLETIN.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—The anonymous committee which in America has recently denounced post-

impressionist art, abusing it as Bolshevik, is perhaps not so mistaken in its diagnosis as in its invective. The art of any age is an exponent of the ideals of the age which likewise find expression in political and social movements. The world never stands still. No Constitution, no political ideal, no social order is final. When a political ideal has been carried out to such approximate completeness as people will endure it gives place to another. We used to be told that the war was going to make the world "safe for democracy," but while the words were being uttered victorious democracy was calling into existence forces which one day may work its downfall. Bolshevism and post-impressionism may well be different faces of one thing. A new world is certainly coming, though no one can yet say what will be its nature. It will not come in a year or in a decade, or even in a century, but slowly by gradual advance, stage by stage replacing the old. A revolution would not hasten it; a reaction would not delay it, for the changes in civilization and social-structure are changes of the heart and ideals of men before they are beheld as political and constitutional innovations.

Bolshevism with all its horrors, its false theories, its foolish experiments, is nevertheless a portent which must be recognized. It means something. Russia will not be the same after the storm has passed as it was before. Something new is arising there, just as something new arose out of or, at any rate, followed the French Revolution. The new world that is to be may well enough not be better than the old, but it will be different. Men talk glibly of progress when all they can be sure about is change. World epochs have succeeded one another since the birth of high civilization in ancient Greece, and each epoch has produced great art, great events, great minds, but whether one epoch was actually better than another may be questioned. Nature insists upon variety. "God fulfils Himself in many ways." Whether the new age now in its embryo stage will be better than the old is doubtful, but it will be different—different in ideals, different in forms, different in art, but the same in fundamental humanity even as we are the

same as our ancestors of hundreds of generations.

Among the collections in the Imperial War Museum, temporarily housed in the Crystal Palace, are some thousands of posters of all the belligerent countries. The German posters afford an interesting illustration of the contemporary art-movement. During the war they were all of more or less academic type, drawn according to the convention that we may roughly trace back to Michelangelo. Such was official German art, supported by the Kaiser and the powers that were, who looked askance upon novelties of design and experiments in new directions. As soon as the Empire ended and the new men came into office in Germany the style of posters suddenly changed, and they became post-impressionist between one day and the next. A similar phenomenon, I am informed, is observable in Russia. The men in the saddle now patronize the post-impressionists. It is a cheap and false conclusion to identify the nascent style with revolutionary politics. They are simultaneous. They express the existence of new tendencies, but they are quite independent one of the other, save that they arise out of a common impulse.

It is easy to pour scorn on post-impressionist art. Personally, I can find no pleasure in it, and do not expect to. I belong to a generation that is passing away. I love the past and find small delight in what the future seems to be offering. But it makes its offer not to me and my contemporaries, but to the rising generation, and still more to the generations that are still later to follow. Moreover, the art that is to come is still inchoate, and will no more resemble the post-impressionist work of today than the art of Michelangelo resembles Giotto's. What we now behold is but the germ. I cannot enjoy it, but neither can I deny it or expect that it will vanish because the writers and masters of the passing generation dislike and abuse it. Were it a local phenomenon it might vanish, but it is not local; it is universal. It is appearing in every advanced country, and is finding recognition everywhere. Two or three days ago I had the opportunity of

visiting a collection of pictures at Bern by an eminent Swiss artist recently deceased. They are instinct with the new tendencies and excited in me far more interest than pleasure; but what I could not fail to observe was the way they attracted and held the attention of young people—youths and girls—who pondered them long and admiringly, and evidently derived much satisfaction from them.

The Seven Sleepers have turned in their grave and a new day is dimly dawning. When that happens a new art always emerges. Medieval Gothic art is heralded in the brooches and other personal ornaments which we find in fifth and sixth century graves. As the Roman Empire fell and the embryo medieval world took shape a new spirit manifested itself obscurely in art, how obscurely only those can realize who have patiently tracked it back into the darkness of the barbarian invasions. Some thing of the same kind is happening now. Even the youngest of us may not live long enough to know what kind of thing the future has in store. But we may in faith believe that it will be great. If the old order changes it is not to give permanent place to barbarism and civil night, but to some other equally great manifestation of that divine power which shapes and uses mankind for its expression and in all the universe in all the ages never repeats its glorious manifestations, but always pours forth something new.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

MARTIN CONWAY.

H.M. Office of Works, S.W.1, Sept. 11.

## AMERICA'S MAKING

THE near approach of October 29, the opening date of the festival and exhibit under the auspices of the State and City Departments of Education which is to be known as America's Making, makes timely some statement of ways in which the Museum may help in this connection.

America's Making has as its purpose to emphasize the contributions that "Americans of various lines of racial descent, from the original colonists down to the present, have made to the American nation"; the